

A partnership for reducing alcohol-related injuries in one Midwestern community

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“WI Town struggles to prevent students from getting drunk, drowning in rivers”



The Problem...

The spate of drownings began in July 1997, when searchers discovered a 19-year-old dead in the Mississippi. Over the next nine years, seven more college-aged men disappeared from area bars only to turn up dead in the rivers.

The serial killer rumors became a near hysteria in 2004 when a 21-year-old UW-La Crosse wrestler was found in the Mississippi off Riverside Park.

Police held a community meeting to assure the public the drownings were accidents. But people heckled them, accusing them of ignoring obvious connections between the deaths — all men, all white, all disappeared downtown.

The rumors erupted again last September [2006], when UW-La Crosse basketball player Luke Homan (from Brookfield, WI) was found dead in the Mississippi after a night of drinking.

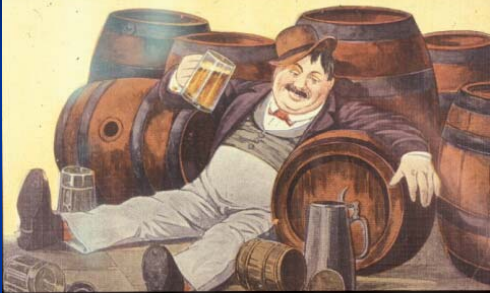
A month and a half later, Minneapolis police reclassified a University of Minnesota student drowning as a murder after initially ruling it suicide. In December, a St. Cloud State criminologist said he had counted more than 20 college-aged men from Minnesota to Ohio who drowned after disappearing from a bar or party since 1997.”

“For nearly a decade, this river city has lived with fears that a mysterious boogeyman was lurking in bars, waiting to drown young, good-looking white men. Since 1997, eight college-aged men have disappeared after drinking heavily at area taverns, only to turn up dead in a nearby river. Each death has rekindled the killer talk.

But police here announced Aug. 21 [2007] FBI profilers have found no signs of foul play in the deaths. The FBI is the third law enforcement agency to investigate the drownings, and all have reached the same conclusion: They're accidents.”

La Crosse Tribune 9/2/2007

"I'm All Alone, But in Good Spirits" In Milwaukee



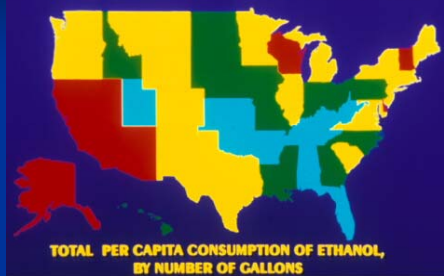
The Great State of Wisconsin...



- No Alcohol Board of Control
- Parents can legally provide minor dependents alcohol
- 1st Offense OWI/DWI – *civil forfeiture (3rd offense felony)*
- Last time the Beer Tax was increased...**1969**
- 60 Breweries statewide
- Home to 7 of the top 8 U.S. cities for taverns per capita
- Consumes approximately 14% (*2.8 million gallons*) of Brandy annually. Only California with 5 times the population drank more (*4.0 million gallons*)
- Unconstitutional to set up sobriety check points

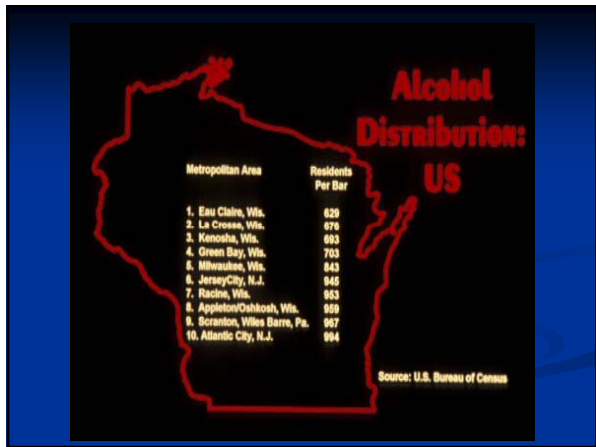


Legend for ethanol consumption: <2.0, 2.0-2.4, 2.5-2.9, ≥3.0



TOTAL PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION OF ETHANOL, BY NUMBER OF GALLONS









The World's Largest Six Pack



- Started in 1961
- Named "The Best Place to Fest" by USA Today in 2000.
- Initially it was a 3 day event, expanded to 1 week in the 1980s
- Expanded in 2001 to a 10 day (2 weekend) event.
- The Maple Leaf Parade is one of the largest parade events in the midwest (100,000-200,000 people)



Changing the Culture of Risky Drinking Behavior

Reducing Alcohol-Related Injuries

La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium
and
Medical College of Wisconsin
Injury Research Center

Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program
Grant 7/07-6/08

Overview *Reducing Alcohol-Related Injuries*

Grant Goals:

1. Convene a county-wide Alcohol and Injury Risk Reduction Community Coalition
2. Complete a Burden of Alcohol Use and Injury Report for La Crosse County
3. Compile an assets inventory of community-based alcohol prevention, treatment and policy resources in La Crosse County
4. Develop an evidence-based strategic plan for long-term reduction of alcohol-related injury in 12-24 year olds in La Crosse County.

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Describing the Problem

Binge Drinking Estimates La Crosse County, Wisconsin and National Rates

Year(s)	La Crosse County	Wisconsin	National Average
1993-1997	24%	24%	16% (1997)
1998-2004	29.5%	24.5%	14.4% (2005)
2000-2006	44.9% (18-24 year olds)		
Healthy People 2010 Goal:			15%

Alcohol: Wisconsin Adolescents

- 52% reported having had at least one alcoholic beverage in the past 30 days.
- 66% who had drunk alcohol in the past month drank five or more drinks at one time
- Males were more frequent alcohol drinkers and were more likely to report binge drinking than females

WI BSAS and DPI, 2000

Alcohol-related injury deaths 2003-2007

Deaths in La Crosse county aged 15-24

	Number of deaths	Sex	Cause of death	Manner of death	Blood alcohol range
2003-2007	14	13 Male 1 Female	6 Motor Veh. Crash 4 drowning 1 fall 1 pedestrian 2 suicide	9 Unintentional 2 Intentional 2 Undetermined	0.15- 0.32

Source: Office of the Medical Examiner

La Crosse ED visits compared to state

2004-2006	La Crosse Resident		Wisconsin	
	12 to 24	25+	12 to 24	25+
Total Intentional	10%	19%	6%	12%
Homicide-Assault	11%	19%	5%	9%
Suicide-Self Harm	5%	18%	7%	18%
Total Unintentional	3%	3%	1%	12%
Fall	5%	5%	2%	3%
MVC	6%	4%	3%	3%

City of La Crosse Police Dept

Age and sex of those involved in alcohol-related calls: January 2006- August 2007

Age	Female	Male	Total
17-20	1,004 (40%)	1529 (60%)	2533 (63%)
21-24	135 (23%)	458 (77%)	5931 (15%)
25-64	221 (25%)	674 (75%)	895 (22%)
65-83	3 (20%)	12 (80%)	15 (<1%)
Total	1,363 (34%)	2,673 (66%)	4036

The Plan of Attack

The Solution?

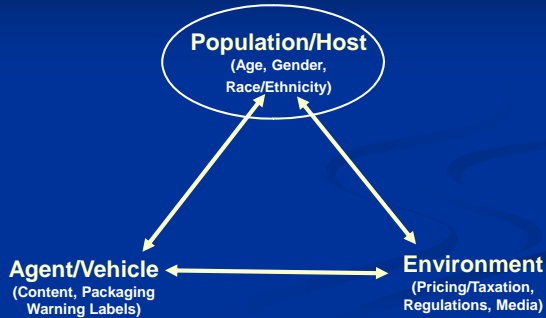
Grants sure help!

- \$300,000 (\$100,000 for 3 years) to address **Underage Drinking** from the Medical College of Wisconsin - Healthier Wisconsin Partnership Program Grant
- \$115,000/year (?# years) to address **Binge Drinking** - SPF-SIG contract with the DHS
- \$375,000 (\$75,000 for 5 years) to address **Underage/Binge Drinking** – Drug Free Communities Grant

3Ps

- Programs – short-term awareness, knowledge-building or behavior change programs
- Physical Projects – physical permanent changes in the built environment
- Policies – rules that change what's acceptable in a community

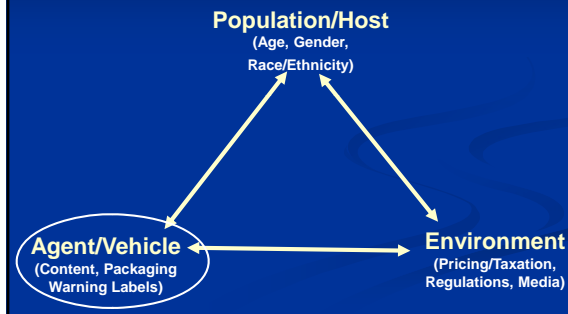
Applying the Public Health Model In Prevention Efforts



Host Strategies

- Mini-grants (UA, Program, \$ HWPP)
- Youth Advocacy Training (UA, Program, \$ DFC)
- Parents Who Host Lose the Most (UA, Program, \$ HWPP + DFC)
- Strengthening Families Program (UA, Program, \$ HWPP + La Crosse & Holmen Schools AODA grant thru DPI)
- Town Hall meetings or other national expert presentations (UA, BD, Program, \$ HWPP)
- Athletic Code evaluation (UA, Program/Policy, \$ DFC)

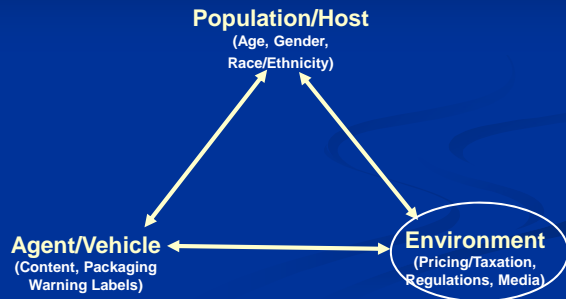
Applying the Public Health Model In Prevention Efforts



Agent Strategies

- Keg Registration all county (UA, BD, Policy, \$ HWPP)
- Support tax increases at the state level

Applying the Public Health Model In Prevention Efforts



Environment Strategies

- Compliance Checks (UA, Program, \$ HWPP, DFC)
- County-Wide Policies – compliance & adjudication (UA, BD, Policy, \$ HWPP)
- Media Advocacy - Social Networking (BD, UA, Program, \$ SPF-SIG)
- Social Networking (BD, UA, Project, \$ SPF-SIG)
- Best Practices at Festivals (BD, UA, Policy, \$ SPF-SIG, HWPP)
- Campus Policies – compliance & adjudication (UA, BD, Policy \$ SPF-SIG)
- Party Patrols (UA, BD, Program, \$ DFC, HWPP)
- Targeted Patrols (BD, UA, Program, \$ Card Grant)
- ID Signage (UA, Project, \$, DFC)
- Ad watch (UA, Program, \$, DFC)
- Regional Law Enforcement Conference (UA, BD, Program, \$, HWPP)
- Responsible Beverage Service Training (UA, BD, Program, \$, HWPP)

Thank you!

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